

*Domestic Violence
And
Communities of Faith:
An Information Packet*



North Carolina Council for Women and
Domestic Violence Commission

Domestic Violence and Communities of Faith: An Information Packet

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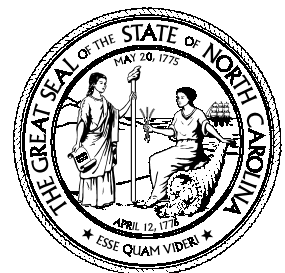
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DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND COMMUNITIES OF FAITH

Domestic violence is a serious social, legal and public health problem that takes a significant personal toll on our nation. Each year in the United States, millions of families suffer tremendous loss and are affected by intimate partner violence, with an estimated 4 million American women being physically assaulted by their intimate partnersⁱ and more than 3 million children being at risk for exposure to domestic violence in their homes each year.ⁱⁱ In North Carolina during the 2000-2001 fiscal year, more than 41,000 new victims of domestic violence sought services from shelters and programs across the state.ⁱⁱⁱ

Religious communities are exposed to and impacted by domestic violence that occurs in the homes and lives of members of their congregation. Twenty years of advocacy have resulted in improved responses by criminal justice, social and health care services systems. Additionally, some religious communities and leaders have worked to help victims and families of abuse; they have recognized the significant physical, emotional and spiritual toll domestic violence takes on its victims, and have offered refuge. Spiritual leaders also often have felt conflicted about how to validate and acknowledge victims' experiences while providing appropriate intervention and guidance to perpetrators, particularly when the perpetrators are also members of their congregations. While some communities of faith have proactively addressed family violence, other religious organizations and leaders continue to ignore domestic violence as an important issue that affects many of their congregants. While this is problematic and awareness efforts should be enhanced to recognize domestic violence as a serious issue for the religious communities, spiritual leaders and congregations must also know how to respond to domestic violence appropriately, understanding what constitutes a helpful response, and which responses further exacerbate potentially lethal situations.

Law enforcement, the courts and health care professionals are important resources for victims and children; however, non-professional sources of support are often sought prior to and/or in lieu of official intervention. Only about one-seventh of all domestic violence assaults come to the attention of the police,^{iv} and less than 3% of women visiting

emergency rooms disclosed abuse when asked about domestic violence by a nurse or physician.^v While some victims may seek help from advocacy groups and service providers, many victims and families will reach out to their faith communities. Therefore, communities of faith and religious leaders can be tremendously valuable resources for victims and families in crisis.

This information packet has been designed to introduce domestic violence as a spiritual issue, one that should be recognized and appropriately responded to within communities of faith.. While much of the information contained in this packet relates strongly to the Christian faith, domestic violence is an issue for communities of all faiths, and spiritual leaders are encouraged to acknowledge the abuse that affects the lives of their congregants regardless of their religious affiliations. This material does not offer an exhaustive discussion on this topic, but is rather a limited introduction to a complex issue, and further inquiry and dialogue are strongly recommended.

Domestic violence is a serious criminal offense that results in physical, emotional and financial harm; it also damages victims' faith by attacking the very source of their strength and by destroying their hope for safe, peaceful lives for themselves and their children. While crisis services are vital in assisting victims and families escape domestic violence, other types of support are also needed to help victims and families heal from the sense of betrayal, emotional pain, and spiritual damage created by and resulting from abuse. Addressing the spiritual component of domestic violence allows us to both acknowledge the spiritual abuse that occurs in domestic violence and its effects on victims, as well as identify a significant resource for support and guidance that victims and families may turn to in their time of need. Included in this material are suggestions for recognizing domestic violence in your communities of faith, tips for intervention, recommendations regarding safety measures for victims and accountability measures for perpetrators, and references to helpful resources and referral information.

Is Domestic Violence A Problem for Communities of Faith?

Consider how these statistics may relate to or represent your congregants:

- ▼ **Approximately 1 in 3 adult women have experienced a physical assault by an intimate partner during adulthood.** (American Psychological Association's Report: *Violence and the Family*, Report of the American Psychological Association's Presidential Task Force, 1996)
- ▼ **Approximately one-third (30%) of all female murder victims in the US were slain by their husbands or boyfriends.** (*Uniform Crime Reports of the US*, 1996, Federal Bureau of Investigation)
- ▼ **Violence by an intimate partner accounts for about 21% of violent crime experienced by women and about 2% of the violence experienced by men.** (*Violence by Intimates: Analysis of Data on Crimes by Current or Former Spouses, Boyfriends, and Girlfriends*, US Department of Justice, March 1998)
- ▼ **40% of teenage girls ages 14-17 report knowing someone their age who has been hit or beaten by a boyfriend.** (Children NOW/Kaiser Permanente poll, 1995) **Approximately 1 in 5 female high school students reports being physically or sexually abused by a dating partner.** (*Dating Violence Against Adolescent Girls and Associated Substance Use, Weight Control, Sexual Risk Behavior, Pregnancy and Suicidality*, Centers for Disease Control, Journal of the American Medical Association, August 2001)
- ▼ **Studies show that child abuse occurs in 30%-60% of family violence cases that involve families with children.** ("The overlap between child maltreatment and woman battering." JL Edleson, *Violence Against Women*, February, 1999)
- ▼ **The elderly are more often abused by their spouses than by their children.** (R. Wolfe, "Elder Abuse and Family Violence.")

COMMON MYTHS ABOUT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Myths and misinformation about domestic violence continue to shape and influence society's perception of abuse. It is essential that spiritual leaders and members of faith communities evaluate their own feelings, attitudes and beliefs about abuse, and dispel pervasive misconceptions about domestic violence.

1. Domestic violence is rare and does not cause serious injury.

1 in 3 women experience at least one physical assault by a partner/former partner in adulthood. (American Psychological Association's Report: Violence and the Family, 1996) "Acute domestic violence" was the reason for 1 out of 9 patients' emergency room visits. (Abbott, et al., Domestic Violence Against Women: Incidence and Prevalence in a Department Population, Journal of the American Medical Association, vol. 273, (June 1995)) And, 44% of victims of intimate homicides had prior threats by the killer to kill; 17% had a protection order. (Florida Governor's Task Force on Domestic and Sexual Violence, Florida Mortality Project, 1997)

2. Domestic violence victims are not only women; women are just as violent as men.

90-95% of domestic violence victims are women. (Bureau of Justice Statistics Selected Findings: Violence Between Intimates, Nov 1994) As many as 95% of domestic violence perpetrators are male. (A Report on the Violence against Women Research Strategic Planning Workshop of the National Institute of Justice in cooperation with the US Department of Health and Human Services, 1995) And, "much of female violence is committed in self-defense, and inflicts less injury than the male-perpetrated violence." (Chalk & King, eds. Violence in Families: Assessing Prevention & Treatment Programs, National Resource Council and Institute of Medicine, 1998). While men can be and are sometimes victims of domestic assault, most victims who experience patterned abuse rooted in power and control, are women.

3. Drugs, alcohol and stress cause domestic violence.

Some abusers do not use substances, and others who are in recovery, still abuse their partners. Additionally, many "non-physical" acts of domestic violence are committed while abusers are not under the influence. Stress may exacerbate abuse, but it doesn't cause it. Abusers typically direct their anger towards their partners and children (rather than their employers, friends, strangers), routinely "planning" assaults to produce little or no obvious injuries to their victims and without witnesses present.

4. Domestic violence perpetrators are unable to manage and control their anger.

Abusers typically plan their assaults in advance and choose the settings in which they are violent. They physically assault their partners in private settings outside the presence of witnesses, choose to inflict injuries in areas of victims' bodies that are typically covered or concealed (e.g. breast, back/buttocks, thighs, back of head) and often employ assault methods that are less likely to result in visible injury (e.g. throwing victim against wall or pushing down or hitting in stomach, hitting in back of head). While abusers may be angry, they choose to direct their violence towards their

intimate partners and children, as there may be little or no significant consequence for their behavior.

What is Domestic Violence?

Domestic violence involves one person's use of physical, emotional, sexual and financial abuse against an intimate partner in order to gain and maintain power and control in the relationship; the use of coercion, manipulation, isolation and minimization assist in instilling fear in the victim, forcing compliance. The following checklist is adapted from the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence:

Does your partner...

Embarrass or make fun of you in front of people?

Always put down your goals, dreams, accomplishments?

Make you feel like you can't make decisions?

Make you feel uncomfortable, uneasy, afraid by certain gestures?

Tell you that you are nothing and can't make it alone?

Grab you, push or pinch, shove or hit you?

Call or page you a lot or just show up to "check on you"?

Blame you for how they feel or what they do?

Pressure you sexually for things you don't want?

Make you feel like there "is no way out" of the relationship?

Use drugs or alcohol as an excuse for hurting you?

Keep you from doing things you want to do/going where you want to go/seeing who you want to see?

Try to keep you from leaving after a fight, "trap" you or leave you?

Always accuse you of seeing someone else/being unfaithful?

Try to confuse you by "twisting" things around?

Adapted from the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, 2002

How Is Domestic Violence a Spiritual Issue for Victims?

Victims of domestic violence are abused and battered by the very people they love, trust, support and believe in. Often abusive relationships begin as healthy relationships do: with promises of love and devotion, plans for a committed future, and schedule changes to ensure time is spent together. Perhaps the victim meets her new partner in her own faith community or in an affiliated setting. The relationship may progress quickly and the couple's commitment may intensify in a relatively short period of time. There may be subtle warning signs, but nothing overtly abusive may occur for a while. The abuser may begin to emotionally abuse the victim, becoming increasingly critical, and begin to isolate her from friends and family, monitoring her activities and contacts. The abuser may begin to question the victim's faith or misuse spiritual teachings to justify abusive actions and beliefs. Some of the ways an abuser may specifically attack his victim's spirituality and connection with her faith community are:

- ◆ Misusing religious teachings, doctrine, scriptures and practices to justify positions of absolute authority, abuse and violence
- ◆ Not allowing the victim to read, have access to or destroying the victim's spiritual books, materials, prayer beads, religious dress, spiritual items, and religious artifacts
- ◆ Interrupting or interfering with the victim's attempts to study religious teachings, pray or communicate with her God
- ◆ Not allowing the victim to attend her faith communities' worship services, faith community sponsored events, and/or religious ceremonies
- ◆ Accusing the victim of inappropriateness with members of her faith community and/or the religious leader, justifying restriction from communication/contact
- ◆ Forcing the victim to worship and adhere to his religious beliefs/practices; forcing the victim to attend religious events, ceremonies and services that are not her own
- ◆ Forbidding the victim from participating in religious celebrations, events or holidays
- ◆ Not allowing the victim to contribute money to or receive money from the faith community

Barriers to Leaving Violent Situations Experienced by Victims of Domestic Violence

Victims of domestic violence often face enormous barriers in their attempts to acknowledge and address abuse in their lives. The following are only a few of the common obstacles experienced by victims in their decisions to stay or leave:

FEAR

Victims are afraid to stay because they do not want themselves or their children to be hurt or killed. They are also afraid to leave due to abusers' threats to find them, hurt and/or kill them and/or their children. Victims may also fear being alone or may believe the abusers' criticisms; they may fear the unknown.

FINANCES

Abusers typically do not allow victims to possess, have access to or knowledge of money and resources. Victims who aren't allowed to work or can't access money without the abuser's permission, do not have money for transportation, do not have money for housing, food, clothing and other necessities, and may not be able to earn money without skills training and employment assistance services. Victims with children are constantly asking themselves, "where will we live?," "how will we eat?," and "will we be able to make it?" Financial constraints are significant barriers for victims attempting to leave.

CULTURAL/RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

Many victims are concerned about what their neighbors, and members of their faith communities, will think if they leave or report the abuse. They may believe or have been told that leaving is not an option, that violence is an expected part of family life, and that they will be abandoned/rejected by God, by their family and by fellow worshippers. For victims who experience language and cultural barriers, leaving an abusive relationship may require them to communicate effectively, to assimilate and accommodate to foreign customs and environments, and to abandon strong connections to and the sense of security provided by their religious or cultural support systems.

Why Has Domestic Violence Not Been Addressed As A Spiritual Crisis?

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, the battered women's movement worked to provide grassroots assistance - shelter, food, transportation, and advocacy - for battered women and their children. In 1978, the first domestic violence shelter in North Carolina was opened in Caldwell County. At that time, only secular programs and services were available for victims of domestic violence, and communities of faith were not identifying this need as one they needed to address. Additionally, advocates have not seen spiritual leaders as obvious allies. Historically, there have been notable barriers in approaching this issue within religious communities. These barriers are outlined by Rev. Marie M. Fortune, in her work entitled "Ministry in Response to Violence in the Family: Pastoral and Prophetic."^{vi} An excerpt is provided below:

Religious Leaders Have not Been Prepared.

Because domestic violence has not been identified as a spiritual issue, very little, if any specific instruction is provided to students and practitioners in seminaries, schools and departments of theology and religious study, pastoral counseling programs, and other training and education offered to spiritual leaders for certification and accreditation, on how to recognize and respond to intimate partner abuse. As a result, spiritual leaders do not always recognize family violence, do not actively assess for intimate partner abuse, and subsequently, are not adequately prepared to respond to the complex dynamics of domestic violence when they are present.

The Issue Has Been Denied and Minimized.

Domestic violence is a crime that is often committed in secrecy. The progressive nature of domestic violence is sometimes difficult to detect, and victims, perpetrators and professionals often deny and minimize the abuse and its effects. Victims may have difficulty describing accounts of psychological and emotional abuse, manipulation and intimidation, or may believe that these forms of abuse are not domestic violence because they do not involve severe, life-threatening physical assaults. Thus, victims may

minimize the abuse they experience, may question their own judgment because they have internalized the abusers' assertions that they are "crazy," and/or fail to disclose all forms of violence out of concern that they may not be believed or are too embarrassed or ashamed (particularly if the abuse was sexual).

Many victims may disclose one act of physical abuse and then disclose details about additional forms of abuse over time. If spiritual leaders do not understand victims' minimization and denial of the abuse, they may fail to believe the victims, may concentrate only on the presenting abusive incident while ignoring other forms of abuse, and may minimize the presence of violence and its effects. If victims' experiences and feelings are not validated, if victims' are questioned about their decisions or actions suggesting that they are partly responsible for the abuse, and/or if victims' reports of violence are not taken seriously, spiritual leaders not only neglect to address an important safety issue, they also revictimize battered women and possibly discourage them from further disclosures.

Abusers routinely deny and minimize the abuse they inflict on victims and its effects. When acknowledging domestic violence, they often present themselves as victims or as partners in mutual violence (i.e. each party is responsible for battering the other). Because many acts of domestic violence occur in private settings with few witnesses, abusers often deny that abuse ever occurred. If they do acknowledge their use of abuse and violence, they typically minimize the severity of both the violence used and the effects of the violence; this may also be the point at which they begin to report the victims' use of violence in the relationship. And, if abusers cannot effectively deny or minimize the abuse, they often begin to blame the victims for causing, provoking, requesting, benefiting from and/or deserving the abuse; this may occur when there is a significant amount of tangible, physical evidence (e.g. photographs, police reports, court records, eye witness accounts, etc.). Domestic violence offenders are very manipulative and, when working with untrained helpers, may be capable of avoiding significant consequence for their behavior. It is for this reason that spiritual leaders are strongly urged to refer abusers to professional abuser treatment/education programs.

When victims and abusers deny the abuse, and when other members of the community are not aware of the abuse because of the secrecy, communities of faith and spiritual leaders may be more inclined to deny and minimize the violence and danger, too. Acknowledging domestic violence in the presence of denial can be very difficult. Even when victims are asked about abuse, or batterers are confronted directly, they often deny or minimize the abuse. Spiritual leaders must be prepared to avoid interrogation, rather providing information and referrals for their use when they are ready. (One exception to this empowering approach, however, is that perpetrators should be notified that criminal acts of domestic violence will be reported to law enforcement).

Spiritual Leaders Have Been Expected to Have Complete Expertise.

Traditionally, pastors, priests, rabbis and other religious leaders have been taught to be solitary, "solo" helpers. They have been encouraged to have individual relationships with, and meet all of the needs of their congregations' members. Many communities of faith regard their leaders as complete spiritual resources. Religious leaders may be hesitant to defy this assumption for fear of appearing incompetent. Additionally, spiritual leaders may distrust secular counseling, the legal system, and/or advocacy-based interventions, refusing to make referrals to these agencies and individuals.

Because ministers, rabbis, priests and other spiritual leaders address a wide variety of problems and concerns for the members of their congregations, they are often general rather than specific in their expertise, much like Employee Assistance Counselors. While spiritual leaders may be experts and valuable resources in addressing the spiritual components of abuse and issues of faith, they do not typically have the specialized training to work long-term with victims and perpetrators of domestic violence. Therefore, spiritual leaders should do the following: 1) identify and acknowledge the problem clearly; 2) make appropriate referrals for crisis and non-urgent services; and, 3) provide resources that are helpful, safe and appropriately limited to pastoral intervention and support. Specialized spiritual guidance is a valuable resource and should

complement the services provided by professionals and paraprofessionals specifically trained to address domestic violence.

There Has Been Theological Confusion About Domestic Violence.

One of the most challenging aspects of domestic violence is the societal, cultural and religious rationalizations for violence in the family. While not condoning the abuse overtly, faith communities and leaders have failed to denounce the use of violence and have sometimes supported justifications for its use for certain "permitted" circumstances or reasons. Families experiencing domestic violence are often grappling with their own interpretations of spiritual and religious teachings as related to relationships and roles within family structures, what constitutes abuse and oppression, and whether and what types of relief are appropriate.

As Marie Fortune states in the following excerpt:

A theology that allows a victim of wife abuse to explain her condition by viewing herself as a suffering servant - someone whom God has called to suffer at the hands of her abuser in the hope of bringing him to salvation - is in fact a doormat theology...Likewise, a theology that maintains the priority of obedience to the authority of the father in the family - even when that father is molesting his children - denies the suffering of the children at his hands and reinforces the misuse of parental power to the detriment of those vulnerable to it.

-Marie M. Fortune, "Ministry in Response to Violence in the Family: Pastoral and Prophetic"

Additionally, spiritual leaders, in their interpretations and applications of scripture and religious teachings should be clear and careful in addressing domestic violence, understanding that scriptures, doctrine and religious teachings have been misused to justify abuse and violence, to place blame on victims, and to further perpetuate absolute inequalities of power that afford opportunities for domination and oppression.

SOME OF THE MISINTERPRETATIONS OF RELIGIOUS TEACHINGS IN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

- ◆ Spouses, parents, community members, children /descendants from and children of God* are supposed to suffer, surrender, and be grateful that they are chosen to suffer and endure pain as service to God.
- ◆ The abuse suffered now will be rewarded later.
- ◆ God gives someone only that which they deserve and can bear.
- ◆ Turning to God is the only option; prayer and meditation alone will stop domestic violence.
- ◆ The only option available to a victim of domestic violence is to stay in the relationship while the perpetrator gets help (divorce is a "sin" and is forbidden).
- ◆ If victims are good "Christians, Jews, Muslims, Hindus, etc.," they will not be abused...victims of domestic violence are deserving of abuse.

*In this packet, the word "God" is used in a general way and is meant to be inclusive of all specific language of all religions.



How Is Domestic Violence A Problem for Faith Communities?

Victims, perpetrators and family members often seek guidance and support from their spiritual leaders as they attempt to address the abuse that exists in their lives. The spiritual guidance, appropriate information and referrals that victims, perpetrators and family members receive from their communities of faith may assist in increasing safety and promoting accountability. Conversely, victims may be harmed by receiving inaccurate information and referrals for services that are inappropriate. By not addressing safety issues, communities of faith may exacerbate already dangerous, even potentially lethal, situations.

It is a Safety Issue

Domestic violence offenders often abuse their intimate partners and children in private and traditionally do not commit physical assaults in the presence of witnesses (however, many abusers do physically intimidate, control and dominate their partners in public settings). Abuse, in private settings, enables batterers to hide and deny the violence. And, when abuse is discovered, batterers often minimize the incidents or injuries, and blame victims for "causing it." Perpetrators also discount victims' stories of abuse and claim that the effects of such abuse are fabricated or exaggerated. Many perpetrators of domestic violence maintain nonviolent, public personas in order to escape legal and social consequences. Because many perpetrators are not overtly abusive in public, congregation members and spiritual leaders may not directly observe the abuse, and mistakenly assume that safety is not a priority. This incorrect assumption seriously underestimates the constant potential for lethal violence, ignores the ever present threat of danger to victims and their families, and fails to recognize other non-physical forms of abuse which result in devastating, sometimes long-term negative consequences. Religious leaders and faith communities should be cognizant of how their interventions may support or undermine victims' safety.

It is a Service Issue

In all communities of faith, worshipers seek knowledge, support and guidance from their spiritual leaders and fellow members of their congregations. Spiritual leaders play integral roles in, and are present during, the most sacred moments in the lives of the families to whom they minister. Communities of faith help families celebrate the joining of marital partners, the birth of children, and "coming of age" through ceremonies of "passage." They also help families through times of great sadness, illness, and financial and emotional hardship. Communities and pastors support and nurture the spiritual growth and well-being of family units, and in doing so have opportunities to minister to the individual members within those units.

Victims and family members, confused by the abuse in their lives, may consult with their spiritual leaders or other members of their faith communities to gain a better understanding of their experiences, and to solicit help in making decisions. It is important that victims receive information about the variety of options available to them in addressing domestic violence in their lives. Traditionally, faith communities have been hesitant to consider separation or divorce as options; religious teachings and scriptures address the sanctity of marriage, identifying it as a holy institution, and worshipers are reluctant to suggest measures that support dissolution. For many victims of domestic violence however, separating themselves and their children from the violence is a crucial "first step" in securing their physical safety. Many victims seek emergency shelter from domestic violence programs across the country. In North Carolina victims can receive shelter from seventy-three programs in eighty-three counties. In 2000-2001, all adult victims fleeing domestic violence spent more than a total of 119,000 nights in emergency domestic violence shelters across the state.^{vii} While some victims stay overnight, others stay several months in domestic violence shelters.

While emergency shelters are available, many victims often seek law enforcement and legal interventions. Domestic violence offenders may be arrested, and Domestic Violence Protective Orders are available through civil court proceedings. A victim of

domestic violence may receive a Domestic Violence Protective Order that restricts contact by the defendant and evicts the abuser from the residence.

While Domestic Violence Protective Orders and emergency shelters are options for victims of abuse, they do not guarantee absolute safety. The most dangerous time for a domestic violence victim is during the initial separation, as abusers often respond in ways that reestablish or maintain their control. The U.S. Department of Justice estimates that 1.4 million adults are stalked annually^{viii} and separated/divorced women are 14 times more likely than married women to report being a victim of violence by their spouse or ex-spouse.^{ix} Additionally, seventy-five percent (75%) of domestic violence victims who are killed are murdered during the separation.^x When a victim seeks help from her/his spiritual leader, it is imperative that the leader be prepared to provide accurate information and advice that addresses safety issues and concerns. Deciding whether to stay in or leave an abusive relationship is a difficult one, and attempts to leave often require complex and strategic safety planning. While many victims may decide to leave their abusers, others decide to stay in the relationship. Spiritual leaders should recognize the danger for victims in both situations and encourage victims to seek the assistance of domestic violence professionals when making such complicated and difficult decisions.

Perpetrators may also seek the assistance of spiritual leaders and congregation members. When providing guidance to abusers, justifications should not be allowed for the violence and further abuse should not be tolerated. Offenders may benefit from spiritual counseling, but due to the chronic and habitual nature of battering, abusers' belief systems that support abusive tactics, and the element of danger, it is recommended that a referral be made to a local abuser treatment/education program for further intervention. Holding perpetrators accountable, avoiding collusion and prioritizing victim safety at all times can be a tremendous task for persons who are not specifically trained to work with abusers. Providing inappropriate, ineffective treatment and support can place victims in greater danger and assist the batterer in further abusing his/her partner and family.

Family members of victims and perpetrators may seek guidance from their faith communities. They will perhaps need assistance sorting through their complex emotions including confusion, anger, guilt, fear, and sadness. Additionally, family members may deny and minimize the abuse, or blame other factors, or the victim, for the violence. It is important to remember that many abusers grew up in homes where they were exposed to domestic violence. Families that are currently experiencing domestic violence may have few if any resources to offer to other families also experiencing abuse in their homes. Family members, friends and neighbors may request instructional information about what to say, what to do, and how to help. While validating the concerns of family members, it is important to avoid "victim blaming" and to denounce any excuse for the violence. A referral to a domestic violence program may also be appropriate for family members in need of counseling and guidance.

It is a Moral Issue

Many spiritual leaders define domestic violence as a "sin." Victims may have questions about their experiences:

Why me (do I deserve this)?

Does God want me to suffer?

Did God cause this? Why would God let this happen?

What does God want me to do? What would a good wife/husband do?

Has God abandoned me?

Should I forgive my abuser?

Will I be punished if I stay or leave?

It is important to remember that victims may seek help when they: 1) know of available, accessible, effective services, 2) feel they have no other choice, 3) feel their life or the lives of their children are in danger, 4) believe they and their children deserve better (and can have better), and/or, 5) feel believed and supported. When victims seek assistance, it is imperative that a referral be made to a local domestic violence program. The

information they receive from that program may be instrumental in helping them make decisions that are in the best interest of themselves and their children.

It is a Spiritual Issue

In 1982, the Presidential Task Force on Victims of Crime found that churches and clergy had focused primarily on the spiritual needs of prisoners with little or no formal organized efforts for providing support to victims. It has only been in recent years that faith communities have begun to address domestic violence as not only a physical and emotional crisis for victims, but as a spiritual one as well. Historically, churches and spiritual leaders were hesitant to refer victims of intimate violence to domestic violence programs for fear that the only option offered was that of leaving the relationship. While information is provided to victims on safety planning and steps to take when leaving an abusive relationship, this option is not the only one presented. Many domestic violence programs actually work in conjunction with faith communities and leaders across the country to assist victims in making decisions.

What Can Communities of Faith and Spiritual Leaders Do to Help?

It is crucial that communities of faith not only recognize domestic violence as a serious issue for their members, but also acknowledge the role they play in addressing this problem that threatens the lives - physical and spiritual - of so many families in our country. Spiritual leaders and congregations should become knowledgeable about the dynamics of domestic violence, the effects of abuse, and identify ways in which they can assist victims and their families. Communities of faith should provide resource and referral information, always considering safety issues and the need for accountability.

THINGS YOU CAN DO

- Put small safety and shelter referral cards**, domestic violence posters and pamphlets in the women's restrooms
**a card can be obtained from your local domestic violence program and/or is enclosed for reference;
- Preach/lecture/teach/minister, acknowledging and addressing domestic violence as a serious spiritual issue
- Display posters in common areas; place brochures in more private areas
- Acknowledge and denounce common myths and misconceptions about domestic violence; reject excuses for abuse openly and routinely
- Encourage your congregation members to collect donations and resources for local domestic violence programs; coordinate your efforts with the local program, allowing the program to identify needs and any concerns that need to be addressed regarding confidentiality and safety
- Have a survivor speak as an invited guest (if appropriate and safe)
- Sponsor activities and events that help raise awareness about domestic violence (e.g. event during October, Domestic Violence Awareness month)
- Do not remain silent - speak up and out against domestic violence

Tips for Intervention

DO:

Talk about domestic violence
Reaffirm the worth of all people of faith
Encourage members to talk about it
Exhibit helpful materials
Debunk myths and denounce misuse/
of religious teachings to support abuse

Provide safety and support to victims
Hold perpetrators accountable

Know what resources are available
and make appropriate referrals

Be aware of the barriers victims face
in making decisions about what to do

Acknowledge victims' feelings and
concerns - validate their experience

Encourage victims to seek spiritual
guidance in addition to professional
help

Know where your expertise lies

Know that you can make a difference!

DO NOT:

Ignore or remain silent about abuse
Allow excuses for family violence
Breach confidentiality with victim
Neglect to display resource information
Support religious justifications for abuse

Forget that safety is always an issue
Collude with or support abusers'
denial and minimization of the violence

Insist on a specific course of action

Discourage victims from reporting the abuse

Deny, minimize or blame victims for the
violence and abuse

Instruct victims to rely on spiritual measures
exclusively (e.g. "don't report -just pray
harder")

Assume a role you are not trained for (don't
fail to refer to others with expertise)

Forget that you can make a difference!

YOUR FIRST 3 STEPS:

- **Provide resource materials (brochures, cards outlining "safety steps") in women's restrooms and lobbies.**
- **Address domestic violence in your sermons.**
- **Call your local domestic violence program and build a partnership.**

How Spiritual Leaders Can Help Victims, Perpetrators and Families Experiencing Domestic Violence

Victims

- Provide a safe space for disclosure (don't counsel victim and perpetrator together)
- Assure victim s/he is not to blame for the abuse
- Be prepared with religious teachings, scriptures, doctrine, etc. that affirm victim's worth, support her/him in acknowledging abuse, and her/him in making decisions
- Provide resource materials (that are appropriate and safe to receive - safety cards)
- Refer victim to local domestic violence program
- Follow-up to provide support (recommend and refer, do not require or mandate)

Perpetrators

- Confront abuser in non-aggressive manner; acknowledge abuse (don't reveal victim/children as source of information - use training/observation as source)
- Do not allow excuses, rationalizations or justifications for the abuse
- Do not allow abuser to deny, minimize or blame the victim, others, alcohol, drugs, stress, poor anger management, poor communication skills, etc. for the abuse
- Require that all violence and intimidation cease immediately
- Refer abuser to local abuser treatment/education program for intervention
- Follow-up as a means of ensuring accountability (you may also want to check with the victim due to inaccurate self-reports by abusers)

What Friends and Family Can Do To Help

- Do not accept excuses or rationalizations for the abuse and violence.
- Focus on the strengths and abilities of the victim; don't use language or phrases that blame or criticize the victim (s/he is already hearing these from the abuser).
- Support the victim's right to make decisions, even (and especially) when you don't agree.
- State your concern for the safety and well-being of the victim/victim's children; let her/him know that you believe s/he does not deserve to be abused.
- Know what resources are available in your community; make referrals, not demands; follow-up.
- Avoid discussing the abuser; stress accountability instead of blaming.
- Educate yourself about domestic violence and patterns of abuse.
- Support the victim, but not the abusive relationship; support measures that provide options but not ones that sustain abuse.
- Seek support for yourself - seeing someone you care for being hurt is difficult.



It is not an enemy who taunts me -

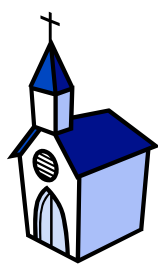
then I could bear it;

*It is not an adversary who deals
insolently with me -*

then I could hide from him.

*But it is you, my equal, my companion,
my familiar friend.*

*We used to hold sweet converse together
within God's house we walked in
fellowship.*



Considerations for Christians in Recognizing and Responding to Domestic Violence

Millions of Christians live in all parts of the world and represent a variety of denominations. While all communities of faith are plagued by domestic violence, there may be certain issues that arise for Christians regardless of cultural, racial, ethnic and socio-economic differences. There are scriptures from the Old Testament of the Bible that speak to the roles of men and women in relationships, the structure of family, and of the use of violence; these are the scriptures most commonly misused and misinterpreted by abusers to justify the use of violence and abuse in families. Additionally, there are scriptures from the New Testament of the Bible that speak of Jesus' suffering and sacrifice, compassion, and forgiveness; victims often refer to these scriptures when trying to answer questions about deservedness, causes of the abuse, and in deciding whether to forgive their abusive partners. Christian ministers, pastors and priests should be prepared to provide appropriate interpretation of these scriptures, along with other scriptures that denounce violence and support the value of all worshipers (including the victim); this response may be especially helpful in addressing domestic violence in Christian communities.

Traditionally, Christian churches have focused on keeping families together, have stressed or supported imbalances of power in marital relationships which allow for abuse, and have failed to adequately rebuke misuses of biblical scriptures to justify the use of violence and abuse against family members. As pastors, ministers and preachers begin to address domestic violence and its serious impact on the lives of their congregants, it is recommended that they seek assistance in identifying "best practices" in helping victims and holding perpetrators accountable in their communities of faith.

Resources for Christian Ministers and Churches:

- Marie M. Fortune's *Keeping the Faith: Guidance for Christian Women Facing Abuse*, Harper and Row, 1987.
- Rita-Lou Clarke's *Pastoral Care of Battered Women*. Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1986. "Wings Like A Dove: Healing for the Abused Christian Woman" - video available from the Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence (206) 634-1903

Considerations for Jewish Communities in Recognizing and Responding to Domestic Violence



Domestic violence occurs in Jewish families and communities. It is estimated that 15-20% of Jewish women are abused, a rate comparable to that of non-Jewish women (Druckerman, *The Jewish Advocate*, 1994). And, the rate of domestic violence is comparable among Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform Jews (Giller & Goldsmith, *All in the Family: A Study of Intra-Familial Violence in the LA Jewish Community*, USC and Hebrew Union College, 1980). The Jewish marriage ceremony is called "Kiddushin" or sanctification. Judaism considers marriage an integral part in the fulfillment of "shalom" translated as "peace." Marital tranquility is believed to be an important component of "peace;" as stated in High Holy Days Prayer Book, "Peace will remain a distant vision until we do the work of peace ourselves." If peace is to be brought into the world, we must bring it first to our families and communities."^{xi} Many battered Jewish victims feel responsible for maintaining peace in the family, and may be reluctant to seek help out of a duty to keep "shalom bayit" translated as "peace in the home". For Jewish victims of domestic violence, admitting to violence and acknowledging abuse may bring a "shanda" or "shame" on the community. While Jewish victims may be reluctant to report their experiences, domestic violence occurs in Jewish homes and in the community. According to one study conducted by the Coalition on Domestic Violence in Cleveland, approximately 25% of abused Jewish women who do seek help for the abuse turn to someone in the Jewish community; among these women, 15% sought help from Jewish agencies while 10% sought help from rabbis. So, when battered Jewish victims do seek help, they reach out to their faith community. It is therefore important that Jewish religious leaders and congregates have information about what resources and services are available.

Resources for the Rabbis and the Jewish Community:

- Jewish Family and Children's Services of Minneapolis
- Mennonite Central Committee Domestic Violence Task Force (204) 772-0726
- Jewish Women International, (202)-857-1300 or www.jewishwomen.org
- Marcia Cohen Spiegel, 4856 Ferncreek Drive, Rolling Hills Estates, CA 90274 (for a comprehensive *Bibliography of Sources on Sexual and Domestic Violence In the Jewish Community*)



"The most perfect in faith, amongst believers is he who is best in manner and kindest to his wife."

"I recommend that you treat women with goodness. "

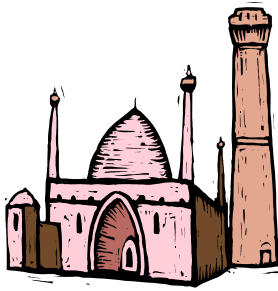
-Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him)

"O Mankind! We created you from a single soul, male and female, and made you into peoples and tribes so that you may come to know one another."

-Qur'an 49:13

"And among His signs is this, that He created for you mates from among yourselves, that you may dwell in tranquility with them, and he has put love and mercy between your (hearts)..."

-Qur'an 30:21



Considerations for Muslims and Islamic Worshipers in Recognizing and Responding to Domestic Violence

Domestic violence affects Muslims all over the world. Muslims - a community of over a billion people from diverse races, nationalities, and cultures - are often members of the Islamic faith community. The North American Council for Muslim Women states that approximately 10% of Muslim women are abused emotionally, physically, and sexually by their Muslim husbands. In Islam, the Qur'an is the principal source of every Muslim's faith, and belief in the *Sunnah*, the practice and example of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), is a secondary source of guidance. The foundation of Islamic societies is the family unit, and marriage is greatly encouraged. As in many religions, marriage is defined as both a legal and sacred act, and measures to dissolve or terminate such agreements are strongly discouraged.

Muslim victims of domestic violence may experience pressure from their religious and/or cultural communities to conceal and/or accept abuse perpetrated by family members. While authentic Islamic teachings do not promote violence against women, religious teachings are sometimes misinterpreted and misused to justify family abuse. These justifications often rely on and are reflective of cultural practices within certain Muslim communities rather than true Islamic principles. It is important when addressing domestic violence in Muslim communities of faith, that cultural customs not be confused with religious teachings and core spiritual concepts. While men and women are considered equal before God according to the Qur'an, contrasting cultural norms and customs that ignore or support the use of violence against women must be considered. Muslim victims may reject interventions believed to conflict with their cultural or religious practices, turning instead to their communities of faith.

Resources of Muslims and the Islamic Faith Community:

- American Islamic Information Center (866) 687-5467 or www.islaminfo.org
- Muslims Against Family Violence (1800)909-1606 or www.steppingtogether.org
- "Kamilat" and "Baital Salaam" both accessible via website: www.Romingerlegal.com (topic: religion and domestic violence)

RESOURCES

This information packet is merely a introduction to the interface between domestic violence and communities of faith. The materials and perspectives provided in this document are fairly generic, and spiritual leaders and congregants are strongly encouraged to utilize the following resources and reference materials, and/or to contact their spiritual advisors for a more thorough, comprehensive examination of this issue.

When Domestic Abuse is Suspected and/or Disclosed:

Victims can be referred to their local domestic violence program for the following:

- Emergency Shelter
- 24-Hour Crisis Telephone Counseling
- Individual Counseling and Support Groups
- Children's Services
- Legal and Court Advocacy
- Information and Referral Services
- Case Management Services (e.g. job training, financial assistance)

Victims can call **1-800-799-SAFE (7233), 24-Hours, 7 Days a week OR** the North Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence by calling **1-919-956-9124, Monday-Friday, 8am-5pm** for a referral to a domestic violence program in their community.

If a victim is in need of immediate crisis intervention services, call **911**.

National (Domestic Violence Resources):

- **The National Coalition Against Domestic Violence**
www.ncadv.org
- **The Family Violence Prevention Fund**
www.fvpf.org
- **US Department of Justice: Bureau of Justice Statistics**
www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs
- **National Women Abuse Prevention Project**
(800) 333-SAFE
- **Texas Council on Family Violence**
(512) 794-1133

North Carolina (Domestic Violence Resources):

- **NC Coalition Against Domestic Violence**
www.nccadv.org
- **NC Council for Women and Domestic Violence Commission**
www.doa.state.nc.us/doa/cfw

Spiritual Issues and Domestic Violence: Resources

- **Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence**
936 North 34th Street, Suite 200
Seattle, WA 98103
(206) 634-1903 / www.cpsdv.org

- **Physicians for a Violence-Free Society**
1001 Potrero Avenue
Building 1, Room 300
San Francisco, CA 94110
(415) 821-8209 / www.pvs.org

- **The Committee on the Status of Women**
The Office of Women in Mission and Ministry
The Episcopal Church Center
815 Second Avenue
New York, NY 10017

- **Black Church and Domestic Violence Institute**
Rev. Aubra Love
1292 Ralph David Abernathy Blvd #100
Atlanta, GA 30310
(404) 758-0019 / www.bcdvorg@aol.com

- **American Association of Pastoral Counselors**
9504A Lee Highway
Fairfax, VA 22031
(703) 385-6967

- **The Safer Society Program**
P. O. Box 340
Brandon, VT 05733
(802) 247-3132

- **World Connections for Women**
203 Shady Rest Road
Morganton, NC 28655
(828) 437-3697 / www.worldconnections4women.com

Religious Resources - Selected Annotated Bibliography

Books

Adams, Carol J. *Woman-Battering*. Fortress Press. 1994.

Part of the creative pastoral care and counseling series.

Alsdurf, James, and Phyllis Alsdurf. *Battered into Submission: The Tragedy of Wife Abuse in the Christian Home*. InterVarsity. 1989.

Documentary, from a theologically conservative Christian perspective.

American Bible Society. *The Lord Hears Your Cries: Hope and Strength from the Scriptures in the Midst of Domestic Violence*. 1995.

A devotional aid for survivors of violence which can be ordered by phone at 1-800-32-BIBLE or online at www.americanbible.org.

Basham, Beth and Sara Lisherness, eds. *Striking Terror No More: The Church Responds to Domestic Violence*. Bridge Resources. 1997.

Background articles, sample workshops for congregations, worship resources.

Bingham, Carol Findon. ed. *Doorway to Response: The Role of the Clergy in Ministry with Battered Women*. 1987.

A beginning handbook for members of the clergy. This book contains a good bibliography.

Blumenthal, David R. *Facing the Abusing God: A Theology of Protest*. Westminster/John Knox Press. 1993.

This book includes detailed exegesis and commentaries on several Hebrew texts.

Brewer, Connie. *Escaping the Shadows, Seeking the Light: Christians in Recovery from Childhood Sexual Abuse*. Harper & Row. 1991.

Brown, Joanne Carlson, and Carole R. Bohn. *Christianity, Patriarchy, and Abuse: A Feminist Critique*. The Pilgrim Press. 1989.

Contains essays written by the editors as well as Carter Heyward, Mary Hunt, Marie Fortune, Rita Nakashima Brock, Beverly Harrison, and Rosemary Radford Ruether; demonstrates how the Christian tradition has sanctioned and contributed to abuse.

Bussert, Joy M. K. *Battered Women: From a Theology of Suffering to an Ethic of Empowerment*. New York: Division for Mission in North America, Lutheran Church in America. 1986.

Deals with the theological origins for violence; challenges a theology of suffering.

Carlson, Lee W. *Child Sexual Abuse: A Handbook for Clergy and Church Members*. Judson Press.

Capps, Donald. *The Child's Song: The Religious Abuse of Children*. Westminster/John Knox Press. 1995.

Explores the idea that some theology is inherently abusive to children and the religious community sanctions this abuse.

Clarke, Rita-Lou. *Pastoral Care of Battered Women*. Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1986.

Cultural and psychological aspects of battering; theological issues.

Court, John H. *Pornography: A Christian Critique*. Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press. 1980.

Englesman, Joan Chamberlain, gen. ed. *Peace in the Home: A Curriculum*. 1991.

Written for five different age groups: preschool-1st grade, 2nd-5th grade, junior high, senior high, and young adult; the six sessions cover the topics of relationships, love, anger, suffering, repentance and forgiveness, and empowerment.

Feldmeth, Joanne Ross, and Midge W. Finley. *We Weep For Ourselves and Our Children: A Christian Guide for Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse*. San Francisco: Harper. 1990.

Covers shame, sexuality, power, prayer, evil, and forgiveness; has suggestions for church leaders and a support group outline.

Flaherty, Sandra M. Woman, *Why Do You Weep?: Spirituality for Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse*. Paulist Press. 1992.

Topics of remembering, sorrow, depression, fear, anger, acceptance, and forgiveness.

Foote, Catherine J. *Survivor Prayers: Talking with God about Childhood Sexual Abuse*. Westminster/John Knox Press. 1994.

Prayers for use in personal meditation or corporate worship.

Fortune, Marie M. *Is Nothing Sacred?: When Sex Invades the Pastoral Relationship*. San Francisco: Harper. 1989.

The story of a pastor, the women he sexually abused, and the congregation he nearly destroyed; valuable appendix which offers a model of a policy for clergy sexual misconduct.

Fortune, Marie M. *Keeping the Faith: Questions and Answers for the Abused Women*. Harper San Francisco. 1987.

Booklet designed to provide quick answers for common scripture-based questions; contains worship resources.

Fortune, Marie M. *Sexual Violence: The Unmentionable Sin*. Pilgrim Press. 1983.

Discusses the Biblical passages depicting sexual violence; offers practical steps for communities; gives appropriate advice for clergy regarding responses to sexual violence.

Fortune, Marie M. *Violence in the Family: A Workshop Curriculum for Clergy and Other Helpers*. Pilgrim Press. 1991.

A comprehensive guide to planning and completing a workshop for church or congregational setting; includes media resources as well as statistics and handout information.

Greven, Philip. *Spare the Child: Religious Roots of Punishment*. Vintage. 1990.

How some religious backgrounds and theology lead to abuse.

Heggen, Carolyn Holderread. *Sexual Abuse in Christian Homes and Churches*. Herald Press. 1993.

The best theological and readable book on the market, It utilizes moderate, mainstream theology.

Horton, Anne L., and Judith A. Williamson, eds. *Abuse and Religion - When Praying Isn't Enough*. Lexington Books. 1988.

A guide for religious leaders who work with abused and abusive individuals and families.

Imbens, Annie and Ineke Jonker. *Christianity and Incest*. Fortress Press. 1992.

A look at incest through survivors' accounts and the impact that Christian images and religious themes have on survivors.

Keene, Jane. *A Winter's Song: A Liturgy for Women Seeking Healing from Sexual Abuse in Childhood*. Pilgrim Press, NY. 1991.

A liturgy developed by a woman survivor for other women; deals with questions of faith and bringing a sense of wholeness back to one's relationship with God.

Lebacqz, Karen. *Professional Ethics: Power and Paradox*. Abingdon Press. 1985.

Lebacqz, Karen and Ronald G. Barton. *Sex in the Parish*. Westminster/John Knox Press, Louisville. 1991.

Theological understandings and expressions of clergy sexuality; tends to blur the boundaries of the pastoral relationship.

McDill, S. R., and Linda McDill. *Shattered and Broken: Wife Abuse in the Christian Community - Guidelines for Hope and Healing*. Fleming H. Revell Co., 1991.

Domestic violence from a Christian perspective; conservative theology.

Melton, Joy Thornburg. *Safe Sanctuaries: Reducing the Risk of Child Abuse in the Church*. Discipleship Resources. 1998.

Includes training for church workers, sample forms for hiring workers, etc.

Miller, Melissa. *Family Violence: The Compassionate Church Responds*. Herald Press. 1994.

A practical guide for churches featuring moderate theology.

National Council of Churches. *Sisters in the Streets: Planning for Ministry with Women Who are Prostitutes*. (Div. of Church and Society, 475 Riverside Dr. Rm 572, New York, NY 10115)

A how-to manual for church groups who are interested in starting a ministry with those involved in prostitution; provides excellent resources.

NiCarthy, Ginny, Karen Merriam, and Sandra Coffman. *Talking It Out: A Guide to Groups for Abused Women*. Seal Press. 1984.

Although secular in nature, a good guide for clergy/pastoral counselors for understanding issues relevant to survivors in their congregations.

Pais, Janet. *Suffer the Children: A Theology of Liberation by a Victim of Child Abuse*. Paulist Press. 1991.

Not a systematic theology, but a good examination of how child abuse must be considered when forming theology.

Pellauer, Mary D., Barbara Chester and Jane Boyajian. *Sexual Assault and Abuse: A Handbook for Clergy and Religious Professionals*. Harper & Row. 1987.

Covers all types of assault and abuse; includes theological perspectives; a classic resource for clergy.

Rutter, Peter. *Sex in the Forbidden Zone: When Men in Power--Therapists, Doctors, Clergy, Teachers, and Others--Betray Women's Trust*. Jeremy Tarcher, Inc., Los Angeles, CA. 1986.

Explores power dynamics in male-female "helping relationships" and the consequences of exploiting them.

Spitzer, Julie. *Spousal Abuse in Rabbinic and Contemporary Judaism*. National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods in New York. 1985.

An excellent resource for the Jewish community.

Trible, Phyllis. *Texts of Terror: Literary-Feminist Readings of Biblical Narratives*. Fortress Press. 1984.

Exegetical work for biblical passages such as Amnon's rape of Tamar and the rejection of Hagar.

Voelkel-Haugen, Rebecca and Marie M. Fortune. *Sexual Abuse Prevention: A Study for Teenagers*. United Church Press. 1996.

A six-session study that covers sexual assault, appropriate touching, incest, good communication skills, and sexism in the media.

Videos

"Broken Vows: Religious Perspectives on Domestic Violence." 59 minutes. 2 parts. Study guide included.

Diverse perspectives including Roman Catholic, Jewish, Protestant, and Evangelical Christian available from Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence; call 206-634-1903

"Wings Like a Dove: Healing for the Abused Christian Woman." 34 minutes. Study guide included.

Available from Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence; call 206-634-1903

"Not in My Church" (Christian) and "Not in My Congregation" (Jewish). 45 minutes. Study guide included.

Clergy misconduct: sexual abuse; the story of one congregation and how the Church responds. Available from Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence; call 206-634-1903

"To Save a Life: Ending Domestic Violence in Jewish Families." 35 minutes. Study guide included.

Available from Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence; call 206-634-1903

"Hear Their Cries: Religious Responses to Child Abuse." 48 minutes. Study guide included.

The story of three child abuse victims (male and female, Christian and Jewish); discusses various church leadership and congregational responses to cases of abuse within local congregations available from Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence; call 206-634-1903.

"Bless Our Children: Preventing Sexual Abuse" (show "Hear Their Cries" first).
40 minutes. Study guide included.

The story of one congregation who implements a child abuse prevention curriculum; addresses resistance, pedagogy, and disclosures available from Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence; call 206-634-1903.

"Love - All That and More." 64 minutes total.

A 3 video set for teenagers about healthy and abusive relationships available from Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence; call 206-634-1903

Journals

Journal of Religion & Abuse

For a sample copy, use organizational letterhead and write:

The Haworth Press, Inc.

Sample Copy Department-Box Comp

10 Alice Street

Binghamton, NY 13904



**We ask ourselves, "Who am I to be brilliant,
gorgeous, talented and fabulous?"
Actually, who are you not to be?**

You are a child of God.

**We were born to make manifest the glory of God
that is within us. It's not just in some of us; it's in
everyone.**

**And, as we let our light shine, we unconsciously
give other people permission to do the same.**

-Nelson Mandela, 1994 Inaugural Speech

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- ⁱ *Violence by Intimates: Analysis of Data on Crimes by Current or Former Spouses, Boyfriends, and Girlfriends*, U.S. Department of Justice. March, 1998.
- ⁱⁱ *Report of the American Psychological Association Presidential Task Force on Violence and the Family*, American Psychological Association, 1996.
- ⁱⁱⁱ NC Council for Women, 2000-2001 program statistics.
- ^{iv} Florida Governor's Task Force on Domestic and Sexual Violence, Florida Mortality Project, 1997, p.3.
- ^v Abbott et al., Laws Mandating Reporting of Domestic Violence: Do They Promote Well-Being?, *Journal of the American Medical Association*, vol. 273, June 1995.
- ^{vi} "Ministry in Response to Violence in the Family: Pastoral and Prophetic", Marie M. Fortune (taken from Family Violence and Religion: An Interfaith Resource Guide, Compiled by the staff of Volcano Press, 1995).
- ^{vii} NC Council for Women, 2000-2001 program statistics.
- ^{viii} *Prevalence, Incidence and Consequences of Violence Against Women: Findings from the National Violence Against Women Survey*, US Department of Justice, November 1998.
- ^{ix} Bureau of Justice Statistics: Female Victims of Violent Crime, 1991.
- ^x Barbara Hart, National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, 1988.
- ^{xi} Gates of Repentance (High Holy Days Prayers Book) Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1978, p. 67.